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University of Nevada Reno Evaluation and Professional Development Component of GEAR UP Abstract

The University of Nevada, Reno College of Education (UNR-COE) will contribute to Nevada State GEAR UP in two distinct ways: (1) professional development and mentoring for GEAR UP middle school leaders and (2) evaluation and research. The UNR-COE team will support the creation of a college-going culture in GEAR UP middle schools through regular professional development and on-going mentoring.

The approach will be the incorporation of college readiness through the use of data-based decision-making in GEAR UP middle schools on a school-wide basis. During fall, 2012, team members will conduct site visits at each middle school to ascertain the specific needs at the school. The basis of the needs assessment will be the Nevada Comprehensive Curriculum Audit Tool for Schools (NCCAT-S).

Following the needs assessment, a specific professional development plan will be devised and implemented through two face-to-face workshops and on-going mentoring. Workshops will be conducted in connection to other professional development available to school teachers. Additionally, academic and postdoctoral faculty will be matched with the leadership teams of the middle school to support continuous improvement.

Evaluation of the professional development and research associated with GEAR UP will consist of three components: (1) evaluation of the face-to-face workshops, (2) longitudinal case studies of the middle schools, and (3) additional research projects associated with the Nevada State GEAR UP project.